

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1 -62. (Cancelled)

63. (Currently Amended) A method for fusing two adjacent vertebrae, comprising the steps of:

providing a spacer, the spacer including a body having a wall, said wall having an outer surface including a concave portion defining a chamber, an opening in communication with said chamber, and a channel defined in said wall in communication with said chamber and said outer surface;

preparing the vertebrae and the intervertebral space between the vertebrae to receive the spacer; and

placing the spacer into the intervertebral space.

64-69. (Cancelled)

70. (Previously Presented) The spacer of claim 63 wherein said outer surface includes a curved portion and a flattened portion.

71. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 63 wherein said body further comprises an outer surface that defines a curved portion and a flattened portion.

72. (Currently Amended) A method for fusing two adjacent vertebrae, said method comprising:

preparing a space between the two adjacent vertebrae to receive a graft;

providing a graft composed of cortical bone and comprising an elongated body having an outer surface and a longitudinal axis along a length of said body, said outer surface including a chamber having a substantially concave surface and extending along a second axis substantially perpendicular to said longitudinal axis, said graft defining a channel extending between said chamber and said outer surface in a direction transverse to said second axis; and

implanting the graft in the space between the two adjacent vertebrae.

73. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 72 wherein said preparing comprises performing a discectomy on a patient in need thereof.

74. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 72 wherein the outer surface of the body defines threaded bone engaging portions.

75. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 72~~ A method for fusing two adjacent vertebrae, said method comprising:
preparing a space between the two adjacent vertebrae to receive a graft;
providing a graft composed of cortical bone and comprising an elongated body having an outer surface and a longitudinal axis along a length of said body, said outer surface including a chamber having a substantially concave surface and extending along a second axis substantially perpendicular to said longitudinal axis, wherein the body includes a C-shaped wall defining the chamber; and
implanting the graft in the space between the two adjacent vertebrae.

76. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 72 wherein said graft is a bone dowel obtained from the diaphysis of a long bone having a medullary canal, said chamber including a portion of the canal.

77. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 72 wherein said body comprises upper and lower flattened portions.

78. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 72 wherein the outer surface comprises vertebrae engaging surfaces.

79. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 72 wherein the vertebrae engaging surfaces comprise ribs, grooves or threads.

80. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 72 further comprising an osteogenic material packed within said cavity.

81. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 80 wherein the osteogenic material is packed within the cavity prior to implantation of the graft.

82. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 80 wherein the osteogenic material is packed within the cavity after implantation of the graft.

83. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 72 comprising placing osteogenic material in the space around the graft.

84. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 72 comprising threadingly implanting the graft in to the space.

85. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 84 wherein the graft includes a tool engagement end having an alignment mark and wherein said threadingly implanting comprises orientating the alignment mark to facilitate placement of the graft in the space as desired.

86. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 84 comprising implanting a second graft into the space.

87. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 86 wherein the second graft includes a tool engagement having an alignment mark and wherein said implanting a second graft comprises orientating the alignment mark of the second graft to facilitate placement of the second graft in the space as desired.

88. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 72 wherein said implanting comprises impacting the graft into the space.

89. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 72 comprising implanting a second graft into the space.

90. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 72, wherein the graft includes a tool engagement end and said implanting comprises attaching an insertion tool having a shaft to the engagement end of the graft.

91. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 90 wherein the shaft is threaded and said attaching comprising threadedly engaging the shaft with the graft.

92. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 72 wherein the graft includes a tool engagement end and said implanting comprises attaching an insertion tool to the engagement end of the graft, said insertion tool comprising an occlusion member configured to overlay at least a portion of the chamber.

93. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 92 comprising packing the chamber with an osteogenic material and extending the occlusion member to overlay at least a portion of the chamber.

94. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 72 wherein the graft includes a channel extending from the tool engagement end to the chamber, and said occlusion member is configured to be slidably received within the channel.

95. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 90 wherein the insertion tool includes an extendable shaft to engage with the engagement end of the graft.

96. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 72 wherein the graft includes a tool engagement end and said implanting comprises attaching an insertion tool having a pair of prongs configured to engage the outer surface of the graft.

97. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 96 wherein the insertion tool includes an extendable shaft to engage with the engagement end of the graft.

98. (Previously Presented) A method for fusing two adjacent vertebrae, said method comprising:

preparing a disc space between the two adjacent vertebrae to receive a spacer
providing a spacer comprising a C-shaped body formed of cortical bone, said body comprising a cavity having a concave surface; and
implanting the spacer in the space between the two adjacent vertebrae.

99. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 98 comprising inserting an osteogenic material into the cavity.

100. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 99 wherein the osteogenic material is inserted into the cavity prior to implantation of the spacer into the disc space.

101. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 99 wherein the osteogenic material is inserted into the cavity after to implantation of the spacer into the disc space.

102. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 98 comprising threadingly implanting the spacer in to the disc space.

103. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 102 wherein the spacer comprises vertebrae engaging surfaces including on of ribs, grooves and threads.

104. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 98 comprising impacting the spacer into the disc space.

105. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 104 wherein the spacer is provided as a dowel having a substantially round cross sectional area when viewed adjacent a first end.

106. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 104 wherein the spacer is provided with flattened upper and lower surfaces.

107. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 98 wherein the spacer comprises vertebrae engaging surfaces including on of ribs, grooves and threads.

108. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 98 wherein the spacer includes a tool engagement end having an alignment mark and wherein said implanting comprises orientating the alignment mark to facilitate placement of the spacer in the disc space as desired.

109. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 98 comprising implanting a second spacer into the disc space.

110. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 109 wherein the second spacer includes a tool engagement end having an alignment mark and wherein said implanting a second spacer comprises orientating the alignment mark of the second spacer to facilitate placement of the spacer in the disc space as desired.

111. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 110 wherein said orientating the alignment mark of the second spacer comprising orientating the second spacer relative to the first spacer so that the cavity of the first spacer and the cavity of the second spacer oppose each other in the disc space.

112. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 98 wherein the spacer includes a tool engagement end and said implanting comprises attaching an insertion tool having an extendable shaft to the engagement end of the spacer.

113. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 98 wherein the spacer includes a tool engagement end and said implanting comprises attaching an insertion tool to the engagement end of the spacer, said insertion tool comprising an occlusion member configured to extend to overlay at least a portion of the chamber.

114. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 98 wherein the spacer includes a tool engagement end and said implanting comprises attaching an insertion tool having a pair of prongs configured to engage the C-shaped body.